# NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

**FOR WRITTEN REPLY**

**QUESTION NO. 1506**

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**(INTERNAL QUESTION PAPER NO. 15)**

**Mrs M O Clarke (DA) to ask the Minister of Health:**

With reference to the Draft Regulations on the Surveillance and the Control of Notifiable Medical Conditions (NMCs) published in the Government Gazette on or about 15 March 2022, and then the subsequent publishing of the Health Regulations Relating to the surveillance and control of NMC’s on or about 4 May 2022, what are his department’s reasons for (a) listing COVID-19 as a Category 2 NMC, (b) not putting duration on the listing of COVID-19 in general as an NMC in the Health Regulations given the weakness of the current strain and abandonment of all COVID-19 restrictions and (c) not differentiating between COVID-19 variants and instead listing COVID-19 in general as an NMC, as opposed to only listing severe variants? **NW1749E**

**REPLY:**

1. COVID-19 has always been category 1 notifiable medical condition. In the latest Notifiable Medical Condition list published in February 2023, COVID-19 is listed as part of the Respiratory disease caused by a novel respiratory pathogen under category 1.
2. The Notifiable Medical Condition list consists of conditions that are of public health concern and need to be put under surveillance for early detection and effective response in case of an outbreak, epidemic or pandemic. There is therefore no time duration of having a condition on the NMC list.
3. Any of the communicable notifiable medical conditions can have more than one variant of the causative agent, therefore it is not practical to amend or update the NMC list whenever a new NMC variant is detected. Information on emerging variants is shared in relevant platforms with public health stakeholders to facilitate clinical management of cases.

END.